

REMARKS

The drawings have been objected to as failing to comply with 37 C.F.R. §1.84(p)(4) because reference characters “2”, “11”, and “12”, have all been used to designate “the cartridges”. An amendment has been made to the specification at page 6, line 20 to clarify that reference character 11 refers to a micro interface.

The reference character “2” has been replaced with reference character “12” in FIGs. 1C and 2A. Corresponding amendments have been made to the specification at page 7, line 1 and page 6, line 20.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd Paragraph

Claims 8 and 14-15 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, 2nd paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Specifically, it is contended that claim 8 has insufficient antecedent basis for a limitation, claim 14 omits essential structural cooperative relationships of elements, and claim 15 is a process claim that describes a step.

Claim 15, which has been amended to incorporate independent claim 1 and intervening claim 14, has been amended to clarify the structure of the liquid handling system. Claim 15, as amended, recites that the cartridges are separable and readable using a multifunctional head. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejections of claims 14 and 15 is respectfully requested.

Claim 8 has been amended to correct a potential lack of antecedent basis.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner’s finding that claims 16 and 17 are allowed and claims 2, 4 and 5 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claim is acknowledged. Additionally, the Examiner’s finding that claims 8 and 15 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, 2nd paragraph and to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is acknowledged.

Claims 2, 8 and 15 have been rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 4 and 5 depend from claim 2.

New Claims

New claims 18-26 have been added and each claim depends from one of claims 15, 16 and 17. Claims 16 and 17 were found to be allowable by the Examiner. Claim 15 was found to be allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims. Accordingly, each of claims 18-26 is believed to be in condition for allowance. The application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and a notice to this effect is respectfully solicited.

The Applicants do not concede to the accuracy of any rejections under 35 USC §102 or §103 contained in the Office Action, but since all claims were canceled or amended to expedite prosecution toward allowability, Applicants do not address individual points raised in those rejections at this time. The Applicants state for the record their intention to pursue claims, similar or identical in scope to those cancelled, to expedite allowance here or in one or more continuing applications.

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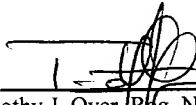
Art Unit: 1743

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the agent at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, any necessary extension of time is hereby requested. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, that is not covered by an enclosed check, please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 23/2825.

Respectfully submitted,

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Figure 1

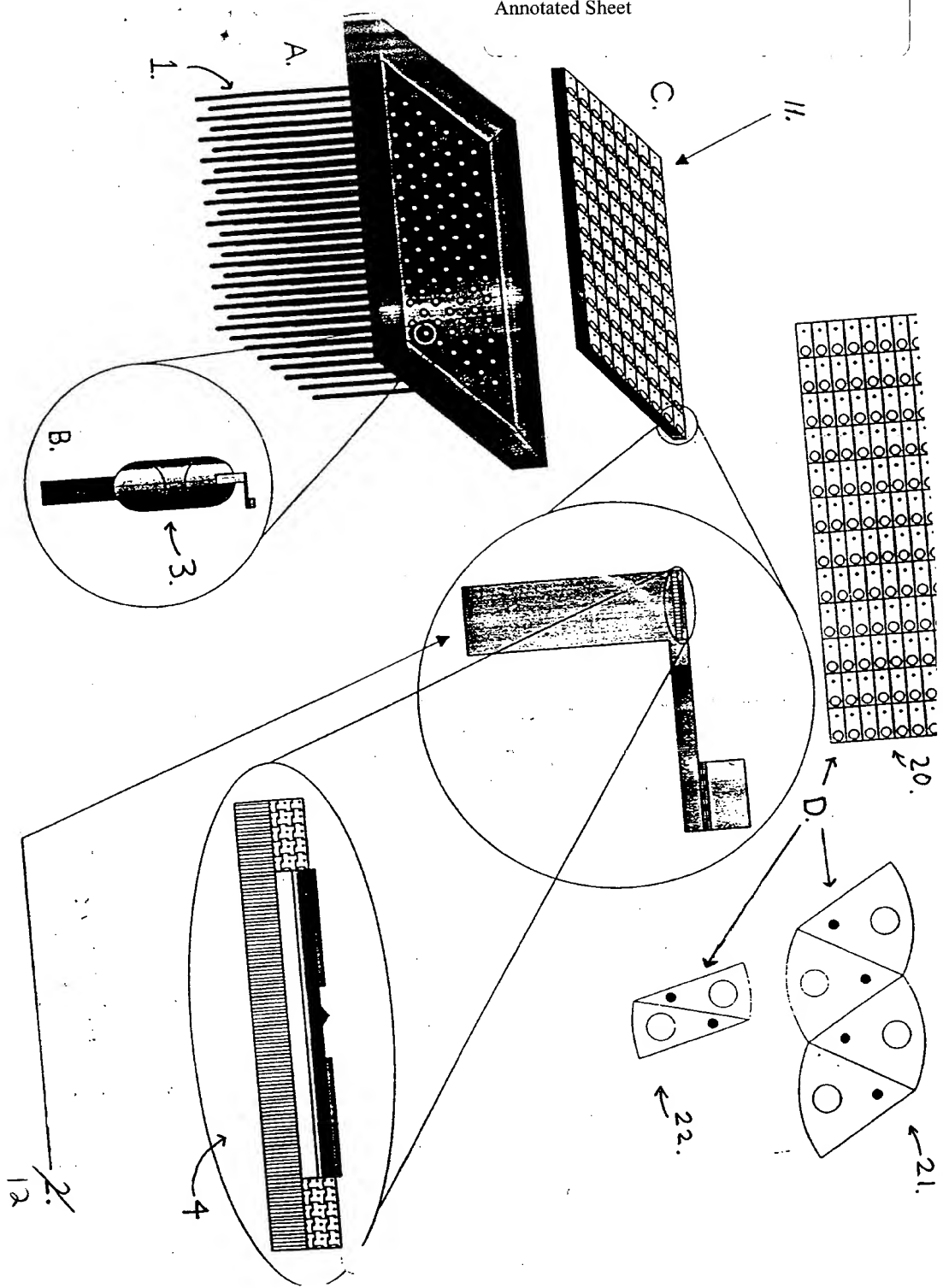


Figure 2:

